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I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. VIII, NO. 42 NOVEMBER 21, 1960 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

The Bitter Harvest in Central America

A revolutionary wave is sweeping over Central America, but the State Department's reactions show that it has learned nothing useful from the Cuban experience. On Oct. 26 the Lemus regime, which had grown increasingly harsh and authoritarian, was overthrown in El Salvador. On November 11 an uprising began in Nicaragua and two days later in Guatemala. It would not be at all surprising if trouble were to erupt next in Honduras. These four tiny republics—lands which live on coffee and bananas—are alike in being sinks of human misery in which the old Latin American triumvirate of landowner, General and priest has long held back basic reform. In two of them, Guatemala and Honduras, they have had the aid of the two big American fruit companies, United Fruit and Standard Fruit. These revolts are their bitter harvest.

Nobody Cared So Long as There Was Quiet

So long as the Army was strong enough in these countries to hold down discontent, the State Department paid little attention to them. No reporters were called in for private briefings to spread alarm about the violation of basic human rights. It is only when popular revolt breaks out that the U.S. takes a hand, and then only to spread alarm about the dangers of Communism and now of that new bugaboo Castroism. Of the four, the most miserable is El Salvador. Nowhere in Latin America is the gulf deeper between the few rich at the top and the many poor at the bottom. Our government, as may be seen from the adjoining box, viewed the situation with a self-deceiving equanimity. But now that the Lemus regime has been overthrown, the prisons opened and reform promised, the U.S. has decided not to recognize the new regime "until" as the *New York Times* reported Nov. 5 "it is satisfied with the political coloration of the civilian members of the junta" which took over "and of their independence from Leftist groups." The government fears that it will fall unless recognized and its members are reported (*New York Times* Nov. 11) as "particularly resentful that their political leanings are being questioned while they have not had a chance to expound their views." They deny that they are either Communists or Castro followers but the denial will do them little good in dealing with diplomats determined to see Red.

Instead of scare headlines about Castro's hand in Central America, the Department and the press ought to be educating the American people on the facts of life in Central America. Only Costa Rica with a relatively wider distribution of land and a high level of literacy has had stable democratic government. The other four have economies in which the bulk of the land is in the hands of a few great landowning families or U.S. corporations, dependent on a pool of uneducated, landless rural proletarians for their harvest help. The average annual income per capita is about $200 a year, a very deceptive figure since it includes many big incomes at the top; in El Salvador a third of the people have an annual income of less than $200 *per family.*

None of us North Americans have any conception of the hateful memories these revolts awaken among our Latin neighbors. The Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, one of the oldest in the hemisphere, was established in the thirties by Anastasio Somoza, one of the leading figures in the National Guard our U.S. Marines organized in their long fight to put down the national hero, Sandino, who rebelled against U.S. control of Nicaragua. The Somozas thus began as U.S. stooges against their own people, and have ruled over them since with our support. The Guatemala memories are more recent. We helped overthrow the Arbenz government in 1954 and then looked on complacently as its successors undid the Arbenz reforms, reforms we claim to favor. Arbenz enacted a moderate income tax in 1954; it was soon afterward abolished by Castillo Armas; "the agrarian reform was halted and most of the land expropriated under the Arbenz regime was returned to the landowners" *(Robert J. Alexander: Communism in Latin America).* Is it any wonder that Castor is a hero in Latin America, and that we appear to be the main obstacle to aspirations for a more decent life below the border? Yankee imperialism, to our shame, is not just a propaganda slogan in Central America. It is a reality. To recognize this, and to stop blinding ourselves with nonsense about Cuban plots, is the first essential to wiser policies and better relations.

The Realities Break Through

"El Salvador has enjoyed more than a decade of political, social and economic stability. . . . The Constitution adopted in 1950 guarantees full political, economic and religious freedom. It provides for the encouragement and protection of private enterprise. . . . The present administration of President Jose Maria Lemus . . . has enacted special legislation designed to encourage the investment of private capital, both domestic and foreign in the country."

—Investment in El Salvador, World Trade Information Service, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, July 1960.

"The little coffee growing country had been seething for months with demands for social and economic change. The great majority of the 2½ million people are impoverished peasants dominated by a small number of wealthy, plantation owning families. . . . One of the first acts of the new regime was to begin freeing political prisoners, many emerging from behind bars looked emaciated and showed signs of mistreatment."

—AP dispatch from San Salvador on the overthrow of the Lemus regime, Washington Star, Oct. 27.

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Supreme Court Majority Little Disposed to Give Radicals Full Measure of Justice

Supreme Court Refuses Even to Hear New Plea by Willard Uphaus

A system which grants full freedom only to those who cannot be suspected of disagreeing with its principles is not a really free society, and in two cases the Supreme Court last Monday showed that a majority of its present members are little more disposed than the average American to extend the full benefit of legal guaranties to radicals.

In both the Willard Uphaus and Arthur McPhaul cases the majority failed to give appellants the benefit of strict construction. It upheld the contempt conviction of Mr. McPhaul for refusing to produce the records of the Civil Rights Congress in Detroit for the Un-American Activities Committee, though as Douglas dissenting (with Warren, Black and Brennan) objected the government was never compelled to prove that he had the records in his possession. In the Uphaus case the majority refused even to hear an appeal in which that imprisoned preacher of peace claimed that his one-year sentence for contempt of New Hampshire's Attorney General was unlawful since it was imposed (as civil contempt) to make him produce information the Attorney General was no longer empowered to require, the State law having been changed since his original conviction.

Dr. Uphaus has been in jail since last December 14 and may be thrown into jail again if he still refuses to supply the names of guests at his World Fellowship summer camp. It is a disgrace to our country and our time that this minister (who denied that he himself was a Communist) should have served out his sentence with so little outcry or protest. The case demonstrates that McCarthyism is far from dead, and that few people in our society really care about basic freedoms of expression and association.

In a third radical case, that of Peter Chaunt, the Court did unanimously agree with Mr. Justice Douglas in stopping a deportation action against an ex-Communist but the grounds were too shamefully flimsy—the distribution of leaflets 20 years ago. However the case was remanded and the way left open to deport him on other grounds. The ruling is far from a final defeat of our vindictive Immigration Service.

The Negro and Gerrymandering

The growing political power of the Negro and its impact on the Supreme Court are evident in the unanimous ruling by Mr. Justice Frankfurter in the Tuskegee case. Fourteen years ago in Colegrove v. Green, Mr. Justice Frankfurter ruled (with Black, Douglas and Murphy dissenting) that unfair districting within a State [Illinois] for voting purposes could not be remedied in the Courts. Ten years ago, in South v. Peters (with Black and Douglas dissenting) the Court refused to rule unfair the Georgia County Unit system, though the dissenters pointed out that this "heavily disenfranchises" the urban Negro. Now Mr. Justice Frankfurter finds the Courts can interfere when the effect is to "despoil colored citizens and only colored citizens" of their voting rights. The Alabama statute redrew the boundaries of Tuskegee to exclude from the city all but four or five of its 400 Negro voters. But if it is a violation of the 15th amendment to deprive Negroes of their voting rights by gerrymandering, why isn't it a violation of the 14th amendment to discriminate against any voters by similar procedure? The Tuskegee ruling brings closer the day when unfair districting may be fought in the courts. That will be a day of liberation from rural domination in Congress and in many State legislatures, especially in the South.

From the Eloquent Dissents of Black and Douglas in the Willard Uphaus Case

"I think the summary dismissal of this appeal without even so much as the benefit of oral argument, when the abridgement of the rights of free speech and assembly is so obvious, is a sad indication of just how far this Court has already departed from the protections of the Bill of Rights and an omen of things yet to come. Such retrogression, of course, follows naturally from the Court's recent trend toward substituting for the plain language of the commands of the Bill of Rights elastic concepts which permit the Court to uphold direct abridgements of liberty unless the Court views those abridgements as 'arbitrary,' 'unreasonable,' 'offensive to decency' or 'unjustified on balance,' for these concepts reduce the absolute commands of the Constitution to mere admonitions. . . .

"My guess is that history will look with no more favor upon the imprisonment of Willard Uphaus than it has upon that of Udall, Bunyan or the many others like them. For this is another of that ever-lengthening line of cases where people have been sent to prison and kept there for long periods of their lives because their beliefs were inconsistent with the prevailing views of the moment. I believe the First and Fourteenth Amendments were intended to prevent any such imprisonments in this country. . . .

"It may be true, as the Attorney General of New Hampshire suspects, that Dr. Uphaus has at some time been in the company of Communists, or that the people who have been in his camp have been in the company of Communists. But even if it is true and those associates are as bad as they are suspected to be, it is my belief that our Constitution with its Bill of Rights absolutely forbids the imposition of pains and penalties upon him for peaceably assembling with them. That great charter was drafted by men who were well aware of the constant danger to individual liberty in a country where public officials are permitted to harass and punish people on nothing more than charges that they associate with others labelled by the government as publicans and sinners."

—Mr. Justice Black dissenting (with the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Douglas concurring) in Uphaus v. Wyman.

"When Alabama asked the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to disclose its membership list, we held that disclosure was not required because if compelled it might well abridge the rights of . . . lawful association. What we said there was not designed, as I understood it, as a rule for Negroes only. . . .

"In Bates v. Little Rock . . . We said: 'public identification . . . as members . . . had been followed by harassment and threats of bodily harm. There was also evidence that economic reprisals would follow public disclosure.' . . . Can there be any doubt that harassment of members of World Fellowship [Dr. Uphaus's organization] in the climate prevailing among New Hampshire's law enforcement officials will not likewise be severe? . . . World Fellowship . . . is as law-abiding as NAACP. The members of one are entitled to the same freedom of speech, of press, of assembly and of association as the members of the other. These rights extend even to Communists, as a unanimous Court held in De Jonge v. Oregon. What is an unconstitutional invasion of freedom of association in Alabama or Arkansas should be unconstitutional in New Hampshire."

—Mr. Justice Douglas dissenting (with the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Black concurring) in Uphaus v. Wyman.

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Kennedy's Swift Announcement Helping to Build Up A Dangerous Precedent

Why Should the Heads of FBI and CIA Automatically Be Reappointed?

Hopeless as it may seem to be, we want to question the precedent being built up by President-elect Kennedy's immediate announcement that he was retaining J. Edgar Hoover as the head of the FBI and Allen W. Dulles as the head of the Central Intelligence Agency. *The Baltimore Sun*, in welcoming the announcement, said (Nov. 11) "because of security necessities neither man, particularly Mr. Dulles, has operated in the full public eye. But those legislators who are informed on the country's security and intelligence and police activities have indicated satisfaction with what they found." Who? Where? When?

The truth is that members of Congress know little about the operations of the FBI and even less about those of the CIA. The cloak-and-dagger operations of the latter have long been a source of concern to thoughtful legislators like Senator Mansfield who has campaigned unsuccessfully for a Joint Congressional Committee on Intelligence to supervise such activities as the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy supervises the AEC. An agency like CIA empowered to take a hand in foreign political activities and to overturn governments we do not like by criminal methods can create situations which may draw us into war. Its activities should be supervised. Its heads should not be regarded as sacrosanct. They should not have life-time tenure.

At Least A Quadrennial Overhaul

At the very least it would be wise to establish the custom of having all our intelligence agencies (there are others) subjected to a quadrennial review on the accession or re-election of a President. He should have the advice of an outstanding citizens committee before deciding whether to retain or change the men heading these agencies. Secret service chiefs may easily become a state within a state, especially when built up as national heroes by skillful public relations. Their secret funds and their knowledge of private misdeeds may give them or their successors an unhealthy power over the government.

Mr. Kennedy acted without accurate knowledge even of the elementary facts about these two office-holders. Mr. Kennedy gave the impression that Mr. Dulles had been in the government since Wilson's day. It is true that Mr. Dulles entered the diplomatic service in 1916 but he left it ten years later in 1926 to join his brother John Foster Dulles in the law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell, where he stayed until his service in the OSS during World War II, and came back to Washington as deputy head of CIA in 1951. He was also wrong in saying that Mr. J. Edgar Hoover's tenure in the Federal service began under President Hoover. Actually the FBI chief entered the Justice Department in 1917.

Ours is the only country outside the Soviet bloc under Stalin where spy chiefs have been glorified in the press and turned into glamorous and feared public figures. Elsewhere intelligence chiefs are neither seen nor heard. Here the heads of both the FBI and the CIA are constantly making pronouncements on foreign, and in Mr. Hoover's case, on domestic policy.

The tradition of the Secret Service is to stay strictly out of politics; its head therefore deserves to be put on a continuous civil service basis. But Mr. Hoover has had a finger in politics for a long time. The close liaison between the FBI on the one hand and the House Un-American Activities and Senate Internal Security Committees on the other has made available to the latter a series of witnesses they have used—always to discredit liberal Democrats. Such activities began with the House Committee hearings which helped defeat Frank Murphy for reelection as Governor of Michigan in 1938.

Mr. Hoover's friendship with McCarthy and his appearance in 1954 before the Internal Security Committee to backstop former Attorney General Brownell's 20-years-of-treason charges against Mr. Truman and the Democrats showed how far he was from being non-partisan and how little he deserves automatic reappointment by a new Democratic President.

There are even stronger reasons for regarding the head of the CIA as a political post to be changed by a new Administration. The head of the CIA plays a key role in many policy decisions. The presentation of intelligence findings is strongly colored by a man's own political outlook. Mr. Dulles is a conservative Republican who spent most of his life as a top Wall Street corporation lawyer. There is as much reason for changing the head of the CIA as there is for changing the Secretary of State.

Backward Ho

"President-elect Kennedy has loaded up the first wagon for the New Frontier. And, behold, the freshest faces on the buckboard belong to those promising young pioneers, J. Edgar Hoover and Allen Dulles."

—Murray Kempton in the New York Post, Nov. 11.

Dr. Wilson's Poisonous Surmise

AEC Commissioner Robert E. Wilson has been going around the country making speeches in which he hints that the Russians have been testing nuclear weapons secretly. The latest occasion was before the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia Nov. 10. We thought our readers would be interested in knowing just when this campaign by Dr. Wilson began and of the very effective answer made to it at the very start by—of all people—Chairman McCone of the AEC.

It was at a hearing of the House Appropriations Committee last April 19 on the AEC budget for 1961 that Dr. Wilson first launched the tenuous surmise on which he chiefly relies in his speeches. "The important thing," Dr. Wilson told the committee (pps. 122-3, Pt. 3, Public Work Approp. for 1961), "is to be sure that the other people are not testing or allowed to go on with testing while we are forbidden. I am reminded of the announcement by the Soviets some 3 months ago of a remarkable new weapon. They did not go into any details, but they said they had perfected a remarkable new weapon. Now," he asked, "how did they perfect it without testing it? I think they must have conducted some sort of test, presumably underground tests, to be able to say that they had this remarkable new weapon. Yet during the period we were still under the moratorium, which we agreed to."

Dr. Wilson has been repeating this in speeches ever since. We hope the members of the American Philosophical Society remembered enough of their elementary logic to see how full of holes it is. For the benefit of other future audiences we call attention to Chairman McCone's reaction to it. He was asked by Chairman Cannon of the Appropriations Committee what he thought of Dr. Wilson's surmise. "I have no opinion whatsoever on what he was talking about, Mr. Chairman," Mr. McCone replied (p. 130). "Commissioner Wilson was pointing out that if it was a nuclear device which had been dramatically improved, that can only be done by the conducting of tests, in our opinion. On the other hand, it might be some other kind of weapon. It might be a satellite, it might be a missile, it might be a nuclear powered aircraft or it might be a means of conducting biological warfare, it might be anything."

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Kennedy Campaigned for Strong Presidential Leadership But Shies Away from Rules Fight

That Fresh Wind Blows Back Herbert Hoover and Joseph P. Kennedy

Our two party system never looked cozier than in the Kennedy visit to Nixon, and foreign observers may conclude that the presidential contest was something like touch football. We are all for magnanimity, but must there be quite so much affection? It will break the hearts of those who voted for Kennedy because they couldn't stand Nixon.

On the eve of the get-together, the story spread in Washington (see Doris Fleeson's column in the *Washington Star* Nov. 14 and the *New York Herald-Tribune* next day) that the visit was arranged by former President Hoover with Joseph P. Kennedy, the President-elect's father, who was kept in the closet during the campaign.

Somebody Slipped Up on the Signals

Nixon was asked if the story were true. His answer seemed to indicate that he and Kennedy had discussed what to say if this question were put to them afterward by the press. Nixon held his press conference after Kennedy's and seemed to think that Kennedy had already given the answer. Nixon said, "I understand that Senator Kennedy was asked about this, and his answer, of course, is the one that I will stand on." Nixon said it would be "inappropriate" for him to say whether "such a call" i.e. by Herbert Hoover to Joseph Kennedy "was or was not made." We hope that the new wind blowing into Washington will not deposit these two discredited old fossils around here in the role of elder statesmen.

Senator Kennedy campaigned on the theme that the U.S. needed strong presidential leadership to end drift and stagnation. But when asked at his first press conference in Hyannis whether he favored doing something about the House Rules Committee he was evasive. He said this was up to the House, and he didn't sound a bit like Woodrow Wilson when he said it. The *New York Times* next day (Nov. 11) quoted an unnamed "House Democrat much concerned with obstruction by the Rules Committee" as commenting "in contrast that the backing of the President was indispensable to Rules Committee reform."

There are signs that the new leadership intends to duck this battle. Senator Mansfield, who is expected to be the new majority leader, told the *New York Times* the same day that a rules fight at the opening of Congress "might bog down Mr. Kennedy's legislative program at the worst possible time." The *only* time when the rules can be changed is at the beginning of an Administration when there is fresh presidential leadership, using the patronage at the disposal of a new executive.

It needs to be repeated that the platform promised reform of the rules in both House and Senate, and recognized that otherwise its promises could not be kept. We urge again: for next month in Washington, a *National Conference to End Minority Rule of Congress,* to build up pressure for action while there is still time. The President elect needs pushing.

Better Keep This A Secret

The idea of less secrecy in science is a congenial one but when we came across an article by Dr. Edward Teller (in the New York Times Magazine Nov. 13) apparently pleading this thesis we found ourselves reading it with a distrustful eye. Dr. Teller seemed to have two purposes. One was to clear away that "secrecy in nuclear weapons" which creates "a barrier between ourselves and our allies." The Pentagon will probably make another effort at the next Congress to get legislation allowing a wider sharing of atomic know-how and weapons. Dr. Teller's other purpose was public enlightenment. "Lack of public information," he wrote, "has dangerously distorted our view of possible future uses of nuclear explosives. It is generally believed that any nuclear war will result in the end of civilization and in the possible extermination of the human race." Dr. Teller termed these views "mistaken." They might, he wrote, "prevent us from developing powerful defensive weapons and may, indeed, lead to world domination by Russia." These "misunderstandings" would be cleared up "if all relevant facts could be put before the public." Here we found ourselves holding back in alarm. We thought the barrier to Soviet world domination lay in our nuclear weapons. If nuclear weapons and nuclear war are not that dreadful, what happens to deterrence? What if the Chinese Communists read that Teller article to the Russians and said, "Aha, what did we tell you? Why all this fear of atomic war?" Hadn't we better keep this one a secret?

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